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BOOK DEPARTMENT

GENERAL WORKS IN ECONOMICS

BRISCO, NORRIS A. *Economics of Efficiency*. Pp. xv, 385. Price, \$1.50. New York: The Macmillan Company.

INGRAM, JOHN KELLS. *A History of Political Economy* (New and Enlarged Edition). Pp. xix, 315. Price, \$1.75. New York: The Macmillan Company, Agents, 1915.

Ingram's *History of Political Economy* first appeared in the ninth edition of the Encyclopedia Britannica in 1885, and in revised form was published as a book in 1888. It has wielded a wide influence in economic study. The present edition is a reprint with an illuminating introduction by Professor Ely and a long, supplementary chapter by Professor Scott, reviewing the doctrines of the Austrian School as well as more recent developments in economic philosophy in Europe and the United States. Despite the handicaps incident to unavoidable proximities, personal and temporal, Professor Scott has sketched contemporary American thought with fairness and insight.

R. C. McC.

GEOGRAPHY

McFARLANE, JOHN. *Economic Geography*. Pp. viii, 560. Price, \$2.25. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1915.

This book, written by the Lecturer in Geography in the University of Manchester, England, aims to give a geographic explanation of the economic resources and industries of the countries of the world. The method of treatment combines the division of the earth into natural regions and the use of political divisions. That is, each country is treated as a unit, but for purposes of description that country is divided into natural regions, each possessing geographic unity. The chapter on France illustrates the method employed for each country of the world. The opening paragraphs give the general geographic and climatic setting of France and its significance. The country is then described under eight headings: (1) the Central Massif, (2) the American Massif, (3) Aquitaine, (4) the Mediterranean Region and the Rhone Valley, (5) the Eastern Border, (6) the Basin of Paris, (7) Communications, (8) Commerce. A diagram of France showing the natural regions is inserted, which, in connection with a rainfall map of Europe, gives graphic aid to the text. For gaining an accurate, understandable picture of agricultural and industrial France, this account of less than fourteen pages does as much as some volumes.

It is unfortunate that so many technical geologic terms are used in the physical descriptions. The fully trained economic geographer will have little difficulty in following the text, but for one not so trained the physical descriptions will not be readily understood. The geologic ideas are basal, but technical geologic terms, many American geographers, at least, believe should be sparingly used in

a work in economic geography whose readers may be economists, historians or business men. The "American massif," for example, has little significance for the man untrained in technical physiography and the use of "primary rocks," "pre-Cambrian age," etc., in its description, is forbidding to the general reader and not essential to the trained geographer's appreciation of the surface features of the region.

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AGRICULTURE, MINING, FORESTRY AND FISHERIES

HUEBNER, GROVER G. *Agricultural Commerce*. Pp. xiv, 406. Price, \$2.00. New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1915.

A subtitle reads *The Organization of American Commerce in Agricultural Commodities*, and this is a good general description of the contents. Over half of the book is taken up with descriptions of the trade in specific commodities, viz., grain, cotton, live stock, wool, tobacco, and fruit. It will be noticed that fruit, the treatment of which is very general, is the only one of these commodities which goes through to the consumer without an intervening manufacturing process. No attention is paid to butter, eggs, poultry, or vegetables, except that we are told that the trade in vegetables is similar to that in fruit. There are also chapters on speculation, inspection and grading, collection and dissemination of crop reports, insurance, financing, prices, and foreign trade.

In describing the trade organization and marketing practices for different commodities, well selected statistics are introduced to show the location of production areas, the volume marketed, and the quantities exported and imported. The methods of marketing at local points and in central wholesale markets are then discussed, and good accounts of the functions of certain middlemen are given.

The author has apparently done little or no first-hand investigating of marketing practices in order to procure information that had not already found its way into print, but the book is valuable and serviceable in that it brings together in convenient form a collection of facts from scattered sources. There is very little discussion of fundamental problems of market distribution; and controversial matters, such as the number of middlemen, the value of public markets and direct marketing, etc., are not touched on.

There is very little in the book with which one can take issue. Line elevators in the grain trade (p. 40) were in operation before 1889; the "on track" sale in this trade (p. 86) usually refers to sales on track at country points rather than in primary markets; the auction companies in the fruit trade (p. 252) rarely receive consignments direct from growers, and many of the largest ones absolutely refuse to do so. The description of the various middlemen in the wholesale fruit and vegetable trade is inadequate, in view of the importance of this branch of the marketing machinery. But these are minor matters. Considering the main purpose of the book—a description of the commerce in important agricultural staples which are principally raw materials for manufacturing industries—the work is valuable and well executed.

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